

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 15, 2010

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-218, The Capitol
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Inouye, Vice Chairman Cochran, Chairman Obey, and Ranking Member Lewis:

As the Senate takes further action on H.R. 4899, the Fiscal Year 2010 Supplemental Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that Senate appropriators include the \$40 million requested by the Judiciary to handle the anticipated growth in workload associated with additional resources the legislation would provide to the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice.

As you know, stepped up enforcement and prosecution efforts in Southwest border jurisdictions during the last several years have resulted in a significant increase in the number of drug, immigration, and weapons cases being filed in courts along the border. Consequently, the current workload experienced by the five district courts along the Southwest border is staggering. When combined, border districts handled nearly 75 percent of criminal immigration cases in the nation's 94 districts in fiscal year 2009 and almost 40 percent of all the nation's federal criminal case filings.

Currently, H.R. 4899 provides a total of \$701 million for border security. Spending in the bill includes \$208 million for border patrol agents, \$201 million for Department of Justice programs, \$136 million for Customs and Border Protection, officer staffing and pay raises, \$50 million to deploy National Guard troops, and \$30 million for drug and smuggling interdiction. While this spending is needed to secure our border and protect our communities from the escalating drug-related violence, it must be coupled with adequate resources to the Judiciary in order to keep pace with the anticipated growth in workload. As it stands now, the district courts along the Southwest border are already overwhelmed and understaffed.

In June, the Judicial Conference of the United States wrote to the Office of Management and Budget Director, Peter Orszag, requesting \$40 million for the Judiciary. Specifically, the Conference requested \$5 million to fund five new magistrate judges and related staff; \$11 million to fund 100 new probation/pretrial officers and clerks' office staff; \$10 million in funds for defense representatives for indigent defendants; \$5 million to fund additional court security officers and security equipment; \$3 million to fund juror costs associated with large drug smuggling cases; and \$6 million to fund space alternations and buildout of additional courtrooms.

To ensure the federal government's stepped-up border security plan is full-circle, we urge you to make these funds available to the Judicial Conference. Without these resources, a bottleneck in the judicial system will occur because the courts will lack the resources necessary to process the additional criminal cases brought by the Department of Justice.

Sincerely,



GARY G. MILLER
Member of Congress



LAMAR SMITH
Member of Congress



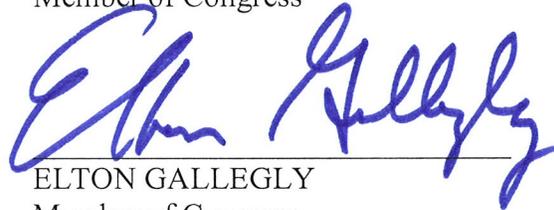
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Member of Congress



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